

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-15 remain pending in this application and are rejected. Claim 16 was previously cancelled. Claims 1 and 13 have been amended herein to clarify the invention.

Claims 1 and 13-15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Ikoma et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,663,007). Claims 5, 10 and 11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Ikoma in view of Asahina (U.S. Pub App. 2003/0027040). Claims 2-4, 6, 7, 9 and 11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Ikoma in view of Asahina and in further view of Masuda et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,865,932).

We wish to thank the Examiner and the Examiner's supervisor for taking the time to discuss the application at an interview with M. Zev Levoritz (attorney for the applicants) on October 10, 2007. Based upon the discussion at the interview, an understanding was reached regarding Ikoma, specifically, that Ikoma teaches away from having the projecting ridges extend all the way to the opening and that extending the projecting ridges in Ikoma would cause the Ikoma invention to fail for its intended purpose. Additional discussions concluded with the Examiner's suggestion that the claim language directed to the welding portions required clarification.

Subsequent to the interview, on October 10, 2007, the attorney for the applicants sent a draft of proposed changes to the claim language regarding the welding portions. On October 16, 2007, in a phone conversation with the attorney for the applicants, the Examiner said that the draft language would likely be acceptable for allowance as long as the clause regarding the periphery of the sealing plate remains in the claim. Applicant has made the required changes to the claim language in compliance with the Examiner's request.

The changes to claims 1 and 13 solely reflect the conclusions of these discussions between the attorney for the applicants and the Examiner and, therefore, applicant asserts that the claims as amended overcome the rejections.

In light of the foregoing, the application is now believed to be in proper form for allowance of all claims and notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

No fee is believed due. If there is any fee due the USPTO is hereby authorized to charge such fee to Deposit Account No. 10-1250.

Respectfully submitted,  
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